



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE	SERIALIZED	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/172 556	10/14/98			454-66505-1

023552
MERCHANT & GOULD PC
P.O. BOX 2903
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-0903

PM82/071G

NOLAND K
EXAMINER

3651
ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

10716/01

DATE MAILED:

This is a communication from the examiner in charge of this application.
COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

- This communication is responsive to the Remarks and Amendment filed on June 7, 2001.
 The allowed claim(s) is/are 2-8, 11, 13-31, 34, 38, 40, 41 and 66-71.

The drawings filed on _____ are acceptable as formal drawings.

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

- All Some* None of the:
 Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE FOR SUBMITTING NEW FORMAL DRAWINGS, OR A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION. This three-month period for complying with the REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL is extendable under 37 CFR 1.136(a).

- Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL APPLICATION, PTO-152, which discloses that the oath or declaration is deficient. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION IS REQUIRED.
 Applicant MUST submit NEW FORMAL DRAWINGS
 because the originally filed drawings were declared by applicant to be informal.
 including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948, attached hereto or to Paper No. 9.
 including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed on _____, which has been approved by the examiner.
 including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment/Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings.

Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Any reply to this notice should include, in the upper right hand corner, the APPLICATION NUMBER (SERIES CODE/SERIAL NUMBER). If applicant has received a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due, the ISSUE BATCH NUMBER and DATE of the NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE should also be included.

Attachment(s)

- Notice of References Cited, PTO-892
 Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____
 Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
 Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
 Interview Summary, PTO-413
 Examiner's Amendment/Comment
 Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for the Deposit of Biological Material
 Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

Art Unit: 3651

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The claims have been allowed because, as noted in the Remarks filed on June 7, 2001, claims 5, 11, 13, 34, 38 and 40 were rewritten in independent form to include the previously allowed matter noted in the last Office Actions. Previously allowed claim 14 recites the method of vending products comprising the steps of ordering, moving, transferring and enabling customer removal of the product. Claim 20 recites the previously allowed matter of a container holder within an internal cavity to hold sealed containers. There is a transport system and a control system connected with a capturer. Claim 66 recites a method for vending products having stops to arrange the products in a plurality of selectable trays. There is also the aligning of a robotic assembly. Claim 67 also recites a method where the moving of the product is by a smooth motion in a vertical x-y plane. Claim 68 recites a method of a vender having a transparent viewing panel and the steps as in claim 14. Claim 69 recites a vender a holder, a product capturer, a transport and a control system. Claim 70 recites a method and steps to visually present queues of products by its viewing. There is the aligning of a robotic assembly and the transfer of the product to an upright manner. Finally, claim 71 recites a vender having a transparent panel, a support to support product of differing shapes and a robotic assembly.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Art Unit: 3651

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Examiner K. Noland at telephone number (703) 308-2168.

Noland/ph

July 12, 2001

Kenneth W. Noland 7/12/01
KENNETH W. NOLAND
PRIMARY EXAMINER
A.U.3651



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office

NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND ISSUE FEE DUE

023552
MERCHANT & GOULD PC
P.O. BOX 2903
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402-0903

PM82/0716

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	TOTAL CLAIMS	EXAMINER AND GROUP ART UNIT	DATE MAILED
09/172,556	10/14/98	037	NOLAND, K	3651 07/16/01
First Named Applicant	SORENSEN,		35 USC 154(b) term ext. =	0 Days.

TITLE OF INVENTION APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR VENDING PRODUCTS

ATTY'S DOCKET NO.	CLASS-SUBCLASS	BATCH NO.	APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	FEES DUE	DATE DUE
3 424.83USI1	221-131.000	J12	UTILITY	NO	\$1240.00	10/16/01

**THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT.
PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.**

**THE ISSUE FEE MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS
APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.**

HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

- A. If the status is changed, pay twice the amount of the FEE DUE shown above and notify the Patent and Trademark Office of the change in status, or
- B. If the status is the same, pay the FEE DUE shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

- A. Pay FEE DUE shown above, or
- B. File verified statement of Small Entity Status before, or with, payment of 1/2 the FEE DUE shown above.

II. Part B-Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and returned to the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) with your ISSUE FEE. Even if the ISSUE FEE has already been paid by charge to deposit account, Part B Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and returned. If you are charging the ISSUE FEE to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B-Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted.

III. All communications regarding this application must give application number and batch number.
Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Box ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE COPY